

TANZANIA DIPLOMA IN POVERTY ANALYSIS

MODULE 1 CONCEPTUALISING POVERTY

Unit 4 How Poverty Works: Gender and the Market Divide

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1 INTRODUCTION

One way to understand poverty is focus on resources that are available to different groups of people. In Unit 2 we thus looked at the way in which economic growth affects the resources that are available to different groups of people and how the distribution of resources affects patterns of growth. In Unit 3, we looked at the ways in which the international division of labour and distribution of resources affects both growth and the resources that are available to different groups of people.

But we can also think of an economy in a different way – as individual people producing, exchanging some of what they produce in markets and consuming. In this unit we will look at poverty from this second angle of vision. We will see why it is important to consider what role the market plays in how people produce and consume, particularly in an economy like that of Tanzania, where many people produce themselves a good part of what they consume. We will see that the distinction between marketed and non-marketed production is important for understanding why experiences of poverty are not the same for women and for men. We will see how the concept of gender can be used to help us understand how poverty works, particularly by obliging us to become more cautious in using the household as a basic unit of analysis for in observing and measuring poverty. Finally, we shall see that if we ask why women and men do what they do, we have to go beyond the household to social, political and cultural processes that cross-cut households.

2 HOUSEHOLDS AND THE RELATION BETWEEN MARKET AND NON-MARKETED PRODUCTION

In observing the economy, it is easiest to measure that which has a price. But not all things that people consume every day pass through markets and not all forms of work that people do are paid. In industrialized economies, these forms of unpaid work include volunteer work outside the home and work that is described as care work, domestic work or reproductive work (e.g., preparing food, caring for children, unplugging a stopped-up drain).

Question

What about in Tanzania? Can you give some examples of non-marketed forms of work?

In Tanzania there is a very broad range of non-marketed forms of work that contribute to everyday consumption. Your list probably includes some of the below:

- In most rural households, a good part of the basic staples that people eat everyday are grown and stored by the people – women, men and children – of the household. When a household must buy basic staples, that often means that they are not rich but very poor;
- Instead of going to buy a bag of flour, women in many households, with the help of their daughters, pound or grind the grain into flour themselves;
- Instead of turning on metered gas or water, women and girls go long distances in search of firewood and water;
- Men build and roof their own houses;
- In a family shop, older children work on weekends and after school as shop assistants and cleaners.

It is not easy to assign a value to these non-marketed forms of work because they are not paid and thus have no clear price. The Tanzanian national accounts distinguish between marketed and subsistence production, including in the latter both production for home consumption and informal sector activity. This is because most informal sector activity is not registered, even though it takes place in markets. If we look only at changes in registered market production, without attending to what is happening to unpaid and informal work, we may misinterpret what is really happening in the economy.¹

¹ If you are particularly interested in the issues surrounding the measurement of unpaid work, you should read the recent study by Lourdes Beneria (2003).

There are many things necessary for everyday life that are not bought and sold in markets. Because they do not have a market-value, the value of the forms of work that produce these things is not measured at all. Sometimes these activities are not regarded as work, even by those who do them.

In the Tanzanian economy, however, particularly in rural areas, the line between work that produces marketed goods and that which produces non-marketed goods is not always clear. People market the same things they consume: rural farming households produce most of their own food, but also sell maize, plantain and cassava; fishers sell most of their catch, but keep a part for home consumption; herbalists receive payment for treatment yet do not always charge their close kin and neighbours.

Though some crops are produced on plantations or large-scale commercial farms, smallholder production dominates Tanzanian agriculture. Whereas plantations and large-scale farmers decide which crops they will grow for the market, smallholders decide not only how much should be marketed but also how much should be kept for consumption. They may even decide that some crops should be grown exclusively for their own consumption.

Quick task

Do you think that plantations and large-scale farms dominate marketed production in Tanzania, leaving smallholders to produce mainly for their own subsistence? Let's use a table to check and see. Think back to Unit 3, which identified Tanzania's six main export crops. List them. Then make a list of those crops that are most important for domestic food markets. Now draw your own version of the table below and fill it to show which of these crops are produced principally by smallholders and which are produced principally by plantations and commercial farms.

Main producer and market orientation for principal Tanzanian crops

	Domestic food crops	Export crops
Smallholders	?	?
Plantations/ large-scale farms	?	?

How does your table compare with mine, based on the Tanzanian Input-Output table from 1992 and some educated guesses? Except for wheat, the plantations and commercial farms produce for export, but smallholder producers produce both for export and for the domestic food market, and consume themselves many of the crops they also bring to market.

Table 1
Main producer and market orientation for principal Tanzanian crops

	Domestic food crops	Export crops
Smallholders	Maize Paddy Sorghum/millet Wheat Beans Cassava Other cereals Oil seeds Other roots & tubers Coconuts Bananas	Cotton Coffee Tobacco Cashew-nuts
Plantations/ large-scale farms	Wheat	Tea Sugar-cane Sisal fibre

Of course we would like to know not just what crops are produced by each sector, but also the share of each in production. That's tricky when part of production has not been marketed. To estimate non-marketed production, one must assign it a value. It is customary to use market prices minus marketing margins to estimate the value of own-consumption or subsistence production. Agricultural statistics in Tanzania include an estimate of the proportion of agricultural production that does not pass through the market. We can use these figures to make a rough estimate of the importance of non-marketed agricultural production.

Table 2
Social structure of crop production 1992

Form of production	Domestic consumption		Exports	Total
	Non-marketed	Marketed		
Small-holder peasantry	51%	34.1%	6.4%	92%
Plantations / large farms		0.9%	7.5%	8.4%
Total	51%	35.0%	14.0%	100%

Sources: The Economic Survey 2002: Table 1 and 1.A; Input-Output Table of Tanzania for 1992: Table 1.
Assumption: All non-marketed production allocated to peasantry under domestic consumption!

Question

So what have we found out? Do plantations and large-scale farms dominate marketed production? Do smallholders produce mainly for their own subsistence?

We've seen that plantations and large farms are indeed export-oriented, but that smallholders contributed almost as much to export production in 1992. We also saw that smallholders do indeed dominate production of food, not just for their own consumption but also for the domestic market.

From this table we can see how important it is to estimate the share of non-marketed production in overall production when we are thinking about the relation between poverty and growth. Table 2 shows that in Tanzania half of total crop production in 1992 was not marketed. About 2/3 of domestic consumption was not marketed. If marketed production increases at the cost of production for own consumption, people may appear to be better off even though they are actually consuming less. Conversely, people may be better off because production for own consumption has increased or become easier, even if marketed production has not increased.

Quick task

In Swaziland in the 1970s, rural extension agents were puzzled because many smallholder farmers took on a package of improved hybrid maize seed, fertilizers and credit, and paid back their loans, but marketed output of maize did not increase. Can you think why?

Researchers found that many households were using income from off-farm employment to finance the input- package and growing improved maize mainly for their own consumption. They found the package to be a time-saving way to assure the maize they needed for home consumption (Low 1986).

Now you can see why the question of the relation between marketed and non-marketed work takes us to households and forces us to look inside

them. How are decisions made about the relation between production and consumption? How are decisions made about the relation between work and leisure?

Now read →

Jane Wheelock (1995) 'People and Households as Economic Agents'.

Why does Wheelock distinguish between the household and the domestic circuit?

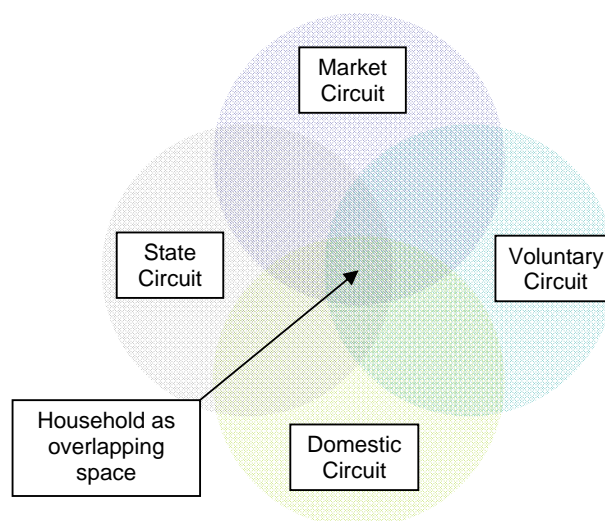
Give some examples from Tanzania of the kinds of things that flow back and forth between each circuit and the household.

Give some examples from Tanzania to show how:

- Marketed production may depend on non-marketed production;
- Non-marketed production may depend on marketed production.

People sometimes talk about the household as a refuge from the market and the public sphere, but you can see that Wheelock has a different and intriguing idea. She sees the household as the space where marketed and non-marketed production meet. She distinguishes three circuits – the market, characterized by exchange, the domestic circuit characterized by reciprocity and the state characterized by redistribution. Let's add another circuit to her diagramme – the voluntary sphere, those institutions such as church groups, regional or ethnic associations (see Figure 1). These activities draw on and create those networks of support that some people now call 'social capital'.

Figure 1
The household as a place where different kinds of work meet



This way of thinking about households as fluid units with changing boundaries is useful in thinking about poverty in Africa, particularly in rural areas. Many household surveys define households as co-residential, clearly bounded units, which share income and a common cooking pot. We know, however, that people may belong to one household in a rural area and another in an urban area, that food sharing often takes place within a group that does not share income, and so on. A household is thus a concept, a rough approximation of reality, not a unit that we can always clearly identify on the ground.²

² For a thorough discussion by anthropologists of the household problem, see Guyer, J.I. and P.E. Peters (1987). 'Introduction, Special Issue, Conceptualizing the Household: Issues of Theory and Policy in Africa.' *Development and Change* 18(2): 197-214.

From Wheelock's diagramme, we can draw insights that are important for thinking about poverty:

- First, households depend on each of these circuits, so in thinking about how to reduce poverty and well-being, it is not enough to pay attention only to those resources that circulate in the market. Because there is an independence of marketed and non-marketed activities, changes in one affect the others as well. If, for example, the price of paraffin rises in the market sphere, a woman may have to stop using a paraffin stove and spend more time searching for firewood.
- Second, the same kind of activity may be organized in different circuits and the household may shift from one circuit to another. Take health-care. When a child suddenly develops a high fever, his mother may nurse her at home, or perhaps she pays a local healer to treat him, but she may also take him to a government health clinic or a mission hospital. Perhaps in the past she did not have to pay at the government and church clinics, but now she does, as health care is commercialized.
- Third, moving from one circuit to another depends on the institutions that govern each one. Some neo-classical economists assume that resources are substitutable for each other in relation to their relative prices and utilities for the household. So if the price of paraffin rises, it is to be expected that the household will consume less paraffin and consume more firewood. Or if a household does not have much savings, it can instead draw on its social capital for support in times of crisis. Anthropologists do not agree with this assumption. They think that social institutions shape the ways that both marketed and non-marketed activities are organized; perfect substitutability is the exception rather than the rule.

Take, for example, a recent discussion in Mozambique, when the impact of a proposed increase in the price of fuel on the poor was being discussed. It seemed likely that the cost of grinding maize would increase in outlying districts because the both the cost of transporting the diesel to the mill and the cost of operating the mill would go up. One group suggested that the household would efficiently adjust its activities accordingly, substituting pounding maize for spending money on grinding.

Question

Why do you think another group objected to this argument?

The other group agreed that the increase would probably lead women in poor households to spend more time on grinding maize, but did not agree that this would be the most efficient use of their time. Men have more control over money than do women, they said, and men do not ever choose themselves to pound maize.

Finally, poverty reduction is not necessarily synonymous with growth of output or productivity in the monetized part of the economy. At the micro-level, improved well-being is not necessarily measured by increased income or the increased capacity to consume commodities. Smallholder farmers, for example, may choose to invest labour in planting green bananas simply to improve everyday consumption, or they may adopt a new way of drying mud-bricks to make a house last longer. A woman may sacrifice the timely weeding needed to assure maximal yield in her cotton or marketing-gardening plot in order to care for an ill child. This kind of divergence underlies the difference that we often see between income measures of poverty and indicators of health or nutritional level. Lineage elders may divert time away from tending their fields to participate in a court case intended to prevent fencing of community pasture land by commercial ranchers.

3 THE GENDERED SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS THAT SHAPE MARKETED AND NON-MARKETED PRODUCTION

Though we began only with the distinction between marketed and non-marketed work, you can see that this distinction has made us consider the way that broader social processes affect what happens in the economy. When we look at what happens within and between households, we find relations of power, authority and inequality. In an economy like that of Tanzania, where so much food production is done by smallholder farmers, thinking about poverty reduction policies means thinking about the ways rural institutions work.

Now read →

Sara Berry (1986) 'Macro-Policy Implications of Research on Rural Households and Farming Systems.'

Why does Berry think that getting price signals right and encouraging competition do not necessarily lead to the development of smallholder marketed production? Do you agree?

Based on her research in Nigeria, Berry suggests that smallholder farmers in Africa may divert surplus from directly productive activity into their social relations. She relates this pattern to the politicization of resource access at a national level (the politics of patronage). Do you think her argument applies in the Tanzanian context?

This is an old paper, written in the first flush of structural adjustment programmes, but the issue it raises – how do macroeconomic policies relate to the social relations that shape the ways African smallholders obtain and use the resources they need to grow food – is relevant today as well. In the first part of this paper, Berry argues that to be useful for macro-

analysis, micro-studies must look not only at production methods and price responses but also at the social organization of resource allocation, particular at intra- and inter-household processes. In the section you have read, she illustrates this by giving examples of how social relations shape access to land, labour and capital in rural areas. She then shows how insights from micro-level studies relate to understanding the impact of macroeconomic processes and policies.

Berry emphasized the importance of attending to intra-household relations of gender when looking at macroeconomic policies. We are now used to seeing the term 'gender', but you may still be asking yourself what exactly this concept means? Is it the same as sex? Box 1 gives you Ruth Pearson's explanation of gender.

Box 1
What is Gender

'Gender' rather than 'sex' is the key concept here because we are concerned with the social roles and interactions of men and women rather than their biological characteristics. Gender relations are social relations, referring to the ways in which the social categories of men and women, male and female, relate over the whole range of social organization, not just to interactions between individual men and women in the sphere of personal relationships, or in terms of biological reproduction. In all aspects of social activity, including access to resources for production, rewards or remuneration for work, distribution of consumption, income or goods, exercise of authority and power, and participation in cultural and religious activity, gender is important in establishing people's behaviour and the outcome of any social interactions.

As well as interactions between individual men and women, gender relations describe the social meaning of male and female, and thus what is considered appropriate behaviour or activity for men and women. What is considered as male or female work, or male or female attributes, behaviour or characteristics, varies considerably between different societies and different historical periods. But it is also important to realize that notions of gender identity, and thus what is fitting for men and women to do or be, have a strong ideological content...In rural sectors of the Third World both men and women often report that women don't do any agricultural work, or that they are just involved as family helpers, or carry out only domestic work. In fact many of their waking hours are spent in activities such as weeding and harvesting, or collecting animal fodder or fuel wood, which have a direct effect on the productivity of agriculture whether the output is used for self-provisioning or processed and sold on the market

Because notions of gender roles and activities have such a strong ideological content, policy often reflects normative or prescriptive versions of female and male roles rather than activities actually practiced by women and men. But, as will become clear later, it is essential to understand the precise nature of what women and men actually do, and their real contribution to production and reproduction, if development policy is to cease being biased against women.

(Pearson 1992: 292)

So the concept of gender recognizes that what women and men do, and even what people understand by femininity and masculinity, vary over time and from society to society. That means that there is no 'natural' or biologically determined way of being a man or being a woman. It also means that even if we find everywhere relations of inequality or subordination between men and women, this pattern can and does change. If gender is a social relation, then how it is expressed will depend on how it is linked to other social relations. Pearson also emphasizes a point made earlier and to which we will return later in the course. The issue is not just what women and men do, but what they think they can and should do.

Recognizing that gender is a social relation has made us aware that generation is also a socially constructed relation. Youth and old age are not everywhere understood in the same way; children and older people do not have the same tasks and privileges. Generation is also gendered, and like gender it is shaped by other social relations as well. A male elder who is the head of an important lineage may have many resources, for example, whereas an old man without wife or children who has been a street vendor in Dar-es-Salaam all his life may have none at all.

Some observers have suggested that gender actually defines the boundary between marketed and non-marketed production; non-marketed production is principally the domain of women while marketed production is controlled by men. There are two related reasons given for this identification of women with non-marketed and men with marketed work:

- In many societies, women are principally responsible for what we call the care economy, domestic work, or reproductive work.
- As markets developed, women were given principal responsibility for assuring everyday consumption while men, who were more mobile and powerful, took control over marketed production.

Ester Boserup (Boserup 1970) thought that the development of markets had been particularly negative for the position of African women because it excluded them from marketed production and relegated them to responsibility for non-marketed production for consumption.

Now read →

Ann Whitehead (1991) 'Food Crisis and Gender Conflict in the African Countryside'.

What does Whitehead think is wrong, and right, in Boserup's argument?

Do you think the development of markets worsened the status of African women?

From this reading of Whitehead, we can draw two conclusions, both of which are important for understanding poverty.

First, incentives intended to lead to an increase in marketed output may not work because women have no interest in diverting their time away from non-marketed work or leisure. There are many examples of this in the development literature: zero-grazing schemes require women and children to do a lot of work in collecting fodder and caring for cattle. These schemes are not so successful in places where women do not own cattle or have no access to the income that comes from the sale of livestock and dairy products. The increased catch rotted in some artisanal fishing schemes since no attention was paid to the incentives women needed to put extra work into drying the fish.

Second, increasing the income of the household does not necessarily make everyone in the household less poor. The outcome will depend on social relations within the household. If his wages or income go up, a man might spend much more money on beer, or cigarettes or a new suit; alternatively

he can spend more money on schoolbooks and shoes for his children or buy more meat and fish for household consumption. In Niassa province in Mozambique, both men and women sell agricultural surpluses, but men usually get more income from crop sales and are less likely than women to spend it for joint consumption. In one focus group discussion, both a woman and her husband admitted to taking maize from the granary for sale when the other was not looking, he for beer and she for dried fish. As she pointed out, he drank alone but the fish was eaten by all. In Lesotho, Ferguson (1990) found that women were generally less enthusiastic than men to see savings invested in cattle. Cattle were claimed by the patrilineage of the men and used in bridewealth transactions; women felt that they would have very little control over cattle transactions.

Activity 1

Can you give some examples from Tanzania of times when members of households may not use the resources they control to benefit everyone in the household? Make sure you find some examples from urban as well as rural households.

4 POVERTY AND INTRA-HOUSEHOLD RESOURCE ALLOCATION

If increasing the income of the household does not necessarily make everyone less poor, then we cannot assume that households are co-operative units that maximize benefits for everyone to the same extent. Yet households or domestic groups are places of co-operation as well as conflict (Sen 1990). How can we take both of these facts into account in determining what will reduce poverty or increase the well-being of individuals within households?

One approach that economists use is to look at households as places where intra-household resource allocation takes place. Some use game theory to model the bargaining conditions that could lead to a particular intra-household distribution of resources. This approach and its limitations are explained in the reading by Gillian Hart (1997).

Now read →

Gillian Hart's article, 'From "Rotten Wives" to "Good Mothers"'. Focus on sections 1-3 and 6 (there is no section 5!).

What evidence has been used to challenge unitary household models that assume that the household head is an altruist or 'benevolent dictator'?

Collective models of the household can be either co-operative or non-cooperative. Explain the difference between them.

Hart thinks that collective models are better than unitary models and that non-cooperative collective models are better than co-operative models, but she still objects to the approach. Why?

How do the debates around household models relate to poverty reduction policies?

What does the title mean?

Let's start with the title. In Becker's unitary household model, the household head had the authority to reconcile the conflicting interests of household members ('rotten kids' and rotten wives') into a joint utility function, which expressed the best possible set of preferences for the group as a whole. If resources are to be provided to poor households in a poverty reduction programme, it is thus proper to give them to the head of household, be that a woman or a man (gender is irrelevant). Under the newer non-cooperative models, there are no common preferences, but given the gendered division of labour under which women are care-givers, women's preferences are usually better for the household as a whole (the 'good mother'). Thus poverty reduction programmes should target women within poor households.

Hart objects to this approach to understanding the relation between gender and poverty because it is economic. She thinks that the resources that women and men have, power to use resources in negotiation (voice), and the terms of negotiation are the key issues to confront. Each of these is the outcome of political and cultural processes that are taken as given in economic intra-household allocation models. Hart makes clear that gender relations within households do not change just because of negotiations between husbands and wives. She points out that cross-cutting political relations are important. Women may, for example, be able to resist beatings by their husbands more easily if they have the support of their own natal families or lineages, or of a women's organization or church group in the community, or if they have access to formal justice in the courts. Her observation makes sense if we think back to the importance that Berry gave to the way social relations shape access to productive resources.

5 IS GENDER THE MISSING LINK?

We don't necessarily expect you to make up your mind now about whether Hart is right or wrong. Those of you who are economists will probably find greater analytical usefulness in the non-cooperative models than those who are not. Let's see, however, how these debates on gender and intra-household resource allocation relate to current policy approaches to gender and poverty.

A recent issues paper of the ECA (Latigo and Ironmonger 2004) is entitled: 'The Missing Link in Growth and Sustainable Development: Closing the Gender Gap'. Box 2 includes extracts from this paper (it is available on the internet if you would like to read the entire paper).

Box 2
Gender as the Missing Link

This Issues Paper discusses how to take gender into consideration when addressing growth issues and how to close the disturbing gender gap in African development. It recommends officially recognizing the contribution of household production and services, to which women provide substantial labour, and then integrating these figures into national budgeting and policymaking processes.

...

Emerging macroeconomic analyses on Africa by the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), the African Development Bank (ADB) and the World Bank consistently show that gender inequality acts as a constraint to growth and poverty reduction. For instance, "Can Africa Claim the 21st Century?" (2000), a study by the three above-mentioned institutions, reveals that Africa has unexploited hidden growth reserves residing in potential partnerships between governments and households, particularly the women in these households. The study concludes that gender inequality is both an economic and a social issue, and that greater gender equality could be a potent force for accelerated poverty reduction in Africa. With households as the biggest sector in the African economy, they are the prime place to examine the substantial contributions made by women and the limitations they face.

Further, in a paper entitled "Gender and Growth in Africa: A Review of Issues and Evidence", Mark Blackden (2003) discusses in depth the results of both macro- and micro-level analyses of the links between gender inequality and growth. This research portrays a remarkably consistent picture of gender based asset inequality acting as a constraint to growth and poverty reduction in sub-Saharan Africa. Women's lack of educational opportunities appears to be related to lower economic growth through its association with higher fertility rates, lower savings rates, and a resulting lower productivity of the entire workforce. Women's disadvantages in finding formal employment seem to correlate to lower economic growth, while increases in female formal sector employment appear to be associated with considerably higher growth. Gender inequalities in education and employment combined are estimated to have reduced sub-Saharan Africa's per capita growth in the 1960-1992 period by 0.8 percentage points per year. If the continent had had less gender inequality in education, as did East Asia, and the same growth in female formal sector employment, per capita income levels in 1990 would have been 30 per cent higher (Blackden, 2003). These disadvantages appear to account for about 15-20 per cent of the difference in growth performance between sub-Saharan Africa and East Asia. In this context, gender considerations can be considered the missing link in achieving sustained growth.

At the micro level, the analysis points to patterns of disadvantage women face, compared with men, in accessing basic assets and resources, especially the labour and capital needed if they are to participate fully in realizing Africa's growth potential. These gender-based differences affect supply response, resource allocation within the household, and labour productivity. They have implications for the flexibility, responsiveness, and dynamism of the continent's economies, and directly limit growth as is evident across a range of country case studies (Box 1). The study "Can Africa Claim the 21st Century?" also shows that investment through women's education and training, as well as their access to productive assets, such as credit, land, and time-saving technology, could contribute to reaching the 7 per cent annual growth rate needed to achieve the MDGs.

(Latigo and Ironmonger 2004)

The paper relies on the 'good mother' assumption. If there were less gender inequality within the household, smallholder production would be more productive and women and children would also be better off. Reducing gender inequality thus both reduces poverty and promotes growth.

Anna Tibaijuka's study in Kagera (Tibaijuka 1994) provides some backing for this argument. She argued that if men would take on some of women's agricultural tasks (producing supplementary food crops on fallow and communal lands in addition to their traditional role on the banana/coffee plantation), instead of searching for off-farm labour, and if women could take on men's tasks such as marketing, overall household income would increase. Her study showed that gender roles seemed to be shifting on some farms in Kagera, with men cultivating crops that used to be grown by women. Box 3 summarizes what she found.

Box 3
Changing Gender Roles in Kagera?

On 30% of the 200 sample farms, men were observed to participate in the production of “women’s crops”. The majority (60%) of the adapters were in the densely populated areas where average farm sizes are smaller. The mean farm size in the densely populated areas was 1.38 ha equivalent to 53 per cent of the means for the whole sample (2.6 ha). Traditionally it is considered demeaning for a Haya man to do women’s work on the communal grazing land. Seventy per cent of the adapters in the food shortage areas admitted it was for sheer family survival, the remaining 30 per cent to raise their cash incomes. In the newly settled villages (found outside the traditional and densely populated areas) where women’s crops (beans, ground nuts, maize) have relatively higher yields and give good returns, men were observed producing them for sale. As a result of economic pressure and/or motivation to earn cash income, an autonomous process to change the traditional gender roles has started and could be enhanced by appropriate educational campaigns launched by the government.

(Tibajuka 1994)

There are, however, other ways of interpreting the evidence Kagera.

Here are some questions based on doubts about other studies that emphasize reducing poverty through giving women in poor households more control over productive assets:³

³ See O’Laughlin, B. (2003). ‘A bigger piece of a very small pie: Intrahousehold resource allocation and poverty reduction in Africa’. *Gender Myths and Feminist Fables: Repositioning Gender in Development Policy and Practice*, IDS Sussex, UK for a more extended review of the literature on in the inefficiency of gender inequality.

- Does the shift in Kagera represent a change in the gender division of labour, or is it rather a flexible adjustment to the prevailing pattern that assigns income from cash-crop production to men? Just as in West Africa men moved into rice production when it became an irrigated cash-crop (remember the reading from Whitehead), so also some men in Kagera moved into cash-cropping of food when the coffee market failed or because they had no access to coffee land.
- The Kagera analysis focuses on marginal increases in income in poor households. Is it not more important to consider the broader patterns that tie certain households and regions to poverty? Why do certain households have more land than others? Why has income from coffee become uncertain for Kagera farmers?
- The analysis focuses only on the roles of men and women agriculture. Recent literature on rural Africa seems to show that diversification of livelihoods is an important basis for mitigating poverty in rural areas (Bryceson 2000).
- By arguing that gender inequality should be addressed in economic policy because it is inefficient are not we failing to recognize that improving gender equality is a legitimate goal in itself? Are not dignity, voice and control over the conditions of one’s life essential aspects of well-being?⁴

⁴ For a good polemical critique of the ‘feminisation of poverty’ literature see Jackson, C. (1996) ‘Rescuing Gender from the Poverty Trap’, *World Development* 24(3): 489-504.

Exercise 1

What do you think? Is improving gender equity a key to poverty reduction in rural Africa? Or is the ECA (and the World Bank) overstating the case for the role that reducing gender inequities can play in reducing income poverty?

Your answer should discuss both prongs of this argument:

- That improving the position of women within households will lead to better overall welfare;
 - That improving the position of women will lead to higher productivity, particularly in smallholder agriculture.
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Whatever your assessment of the ‘gender as the missing link’ argument, the merit of the ECA issues paper is to link intra-household processes to macro poverty issues. You may have been asking yourself how concern with gender relations and the organization of work at a micro-level relates to previous discussions about poverty and growth in units 2 and 3. A final short reading, based on a review of experiences in Asian countries, draws some clear points about the relations between gender, economic growth and poverty. Your summary of the text will help you to link earlier units with this one.

Now read →

Noleen Heyzer (1994) ‘Introduction: Market, State and Gender Equity: The Asian and Pacific Experience’, pp. 21-23.

Do a summary outline, identifying the main points from sections b, c, and d.

6 SUMMING UP

Approaches to poverty and growth have often emphasized increasing marketed output and the money income of poor households. Both are important, but the contribution of non-marketed work to well-being and economic growth is often neglected. Much non-marketed work is done by women and children, but that does not mean that they do not contribute to marketed output; they may simply not be paid for doing so. Households are not fixed units with common interests; they are shifting groups of people whose activities and visions are shaped by social relations, politics, and cultural processes that cross-cut households. Regardless of what position people take on the usefulness of collective household models or the importance they assign to gender as ‘the missing link’ in poverty reduction, most now agree that gender relations within and across households are important to analyse when we are studying poverty.

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